

Bible Study

Overcoming Self-Pity



Seven Churches of Revelation

- **One Thing All 7 Churches Have in Common:
Need to Overcome**
- **“...I know your deeds...”**



Seven Churches of Revelation

- **One Thing All 7 Churches Have in Common: Need to Overcome**
- **Some of the churches received more criticism than others, but they all received admonishments.**



Seven Churches of Revelation

■ Ephesus

- Left Your First Love

■ Smyrna

- Remove The Cause Or Yourself From Your Trouble

■ Pergamos

- Hold The Teachings of Balaam
- Eat Things Sacrificed To Idols
- Commit Acts of Immorality

■ Thyatira

- Tolerate The Teachings of Jezebel
- Eat Things Sacrificed To Idols
- Commit Acts of Immorality

Seven Churches of Revelation

■ Sardis

- Wake Up / Remember What Was Received / Repent

■ Philadelphia

- Hold Fast

■ Laodicea

- Neither Hot Nor Cold
- Self-Centered / Self-Absorbed
 - “I am rich and have need of nothing”
 - “Wretched”
 - “Miserable”
 - “Poor”
 - “Blind”
 - “Naked”

Will Jesus Christ Find Living Faith?

■ John 15:1-11

- With Living Faith, our belief galvanizes into a conviction that will produce righteous works.

■ II Corinthians 13:5-6

- Test ourselves to prove that Christ lives in us.
- We will not fail the test if we draw close to Him and truly work to make the changes we need to make as individuals to take on the very nature and life of God.



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Justification?

- To justify is “to show or prove to be just, right, or reasonable. . . . to defend or uphold as warranted or well-grounded. . . . to declare innocent or guiltless; absolve; acquit.”
- If we seek to defend ourselves against false accusations, this may be proper and right, since we need to have a good reputation before others.
- On the other hand, too often when someone is guilty of an offense, they seek to “justify” themselves, so that personal guilt is lessened and others will think well of him or her.



We Cannot Overcome Sin That We Cannot Identify

- **Can a member of God's church be deceived about their true standing with God?**
 - **James 1:21-27** "Therefore, ridding yourselves of all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted...But prove yourselves doers of the word and not just hearers who deceive themselves...he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror...he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was..."



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Righteousness?

- “Convinced of one’s own righteousness, especially in contrast with the actions and beliefs of others; narrow-mindedly moralistic”**
- Self-righteousness is sometimes manifested in feelings of superiority towards others. “I am right, you are wrong. My way is better than your way.”**
- But self-righteousness can also be reflected in a low sense of self-worth (“God can’t possibly love me”), an inflated sense of self-importance (“I need to do more for God”), and outright unbelief (“I am beyond the reach of his grace”).**



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Righteousness?

- Self-righteousness is trusting in your own righteousness (Luke 18:9). It is believing there are things you can do to make yourself right with God.
- The defining ingredient of self-righteousness is that you are providing your own standard of righteousness.



Overcoming Self-Righteousness

- **How does self-righteousness compare to God's righteousness?**
 - **Romans 3:19-26; 10:2-4**
 - **Philippians 3:8-9**
 - **Self-righteousness is formal conformity to legal requirements based in one's human nature rather than in the faith of Christ. True righteousness is a humble relationship between man and God and between man and man that promotes well-being and peace.**
 - **Since God Himself is the standard of righteousness, He defines righteous action. In contrast, self-righteousness is a rejection of God, the righteous standard.**



Overcoming Self-Will / Self-Indulgence

“Beware of no man more than thyself; we carry our worst enemies within us.”

**- Charles Spurgeon
English Preacher**

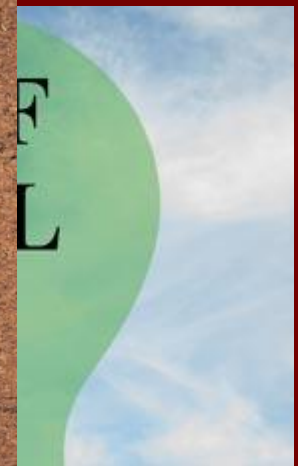
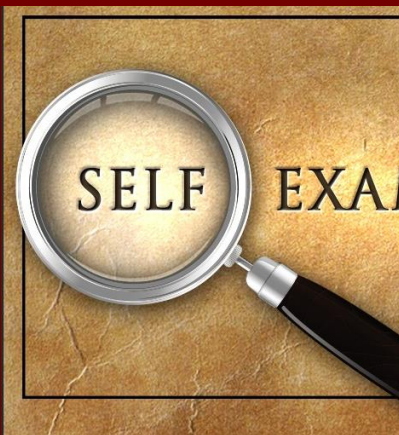
**Although it may sound cliché,
we are truly our worst enemies.
Most of life is a mind game
and the person to control it is
no one but yourself.
You make the choice.**



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Will / Self-Indulgence?

- The quality of obstinately doing what one wants in spite of the wishes or orders of others.
- Self-will is being stubborn or sticking firmly to your own opinion and ideas.
- Self-Indulgence is the act of satisfying one’s desire, pleasures, lusts and whims, especially without restraint.



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

- **Harmful Affects of Self-Justification / Self-Deception / Self-Righteousness / Self-Exaltation / Self-Will / Self-Indulgence**
 - Deterioration of self control
 - Creates close-mindedness / Inflated egos
 - Cognitive distortions
 - Relationship challenges
- **“The less you believe you’re affected by these “self” afflictions, the worse you suffer from it.”**



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Pity?

- The Oxford English Dictionary defines “Self-Pity” as, “excessive, self-absorbed unhappiness over one’s own troubles.”**
- Every human being is prone to self-pity. We are born self-centered, with a powerful drive to protect our egos and our “rights”.**
- When we decide that life has not treated us as “we have the right to be treated”, self-pity can be the result.**
- Self-pity causes to sulk and obsess over our hurts (real and perceived).**



“The Self”: Deterrent to Overcoming

■ What is Self-Pity?

- Ultimately, Self-pity is a disagreement with God over how He has allowed life to treat us.
- “The sin of Self-pity is that we assess ourselves and our circumstances, as though God is not our gracious Father” – Abigail Dodd.
- “Those who sulk into apathy curl up in self-pity ... the faithful patiently and quietly, trust in God to make things right in His perfect time.” – Martin Collins
- Focusing on our woes and petty injustices is self-pity. It is rooted in selfish desires and leads to making an idol of own needs.



King Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard

■ I Kings 21:1-29

- King Ahab is one of the best examples that the Bible records about self-pity. King Ahab and His wife, Jezebel, were evil. They cared nothing about God or others. When King Ahab wanted to buy a vineyard from Naboth, but Naboth didn't want to sell it, he had a tantrum on his bed. He pitied himself because he didn't get what he wanted, and he thought that was unfair.
- King Ahab's self-pity was so extreme that he refused to be happy again until Jezebel crafted a way to kill Naboth and get the vineyard for her husband (1 Kings 21:15-16).
- This episode lead to God's pronouncement of King Ahab and Jezebel's death



Moses: Speech Impediment

■ Exodus 4:10-17

- It is a natural human tendency to respond to life's difficulties with self-pity. Humans exercise a "woe is me" reaction, feeling their suffering is undeserved. When Moses pleads with God to excuse him from leadership, God rebukes his thinly veiled self-pity as faithlessness.



Jonah's Disobedient Fleeing & Displeasure With God's Judgment

■ **Jonah 1:1-3, 10; 4:1-4, 8-11**

- Jonah felt sorry for himself and in his self-pity, he lacked pity and mercy for the inhabitants of Nineveh.
- God rebuked Jonah and tells him that he should have pity for the people (the repentant and those who had not sinned or the 120,000 who do not know right from wrong; possibly children).



Why are “Self-Sins” So Difficult to Detect and Overcome?

■ Galatians 5:16, 19-20

- “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,..”.

■ Isaiah 29:13

- And the Lord said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men.”

■ Matthew 15:8-9

- “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.”

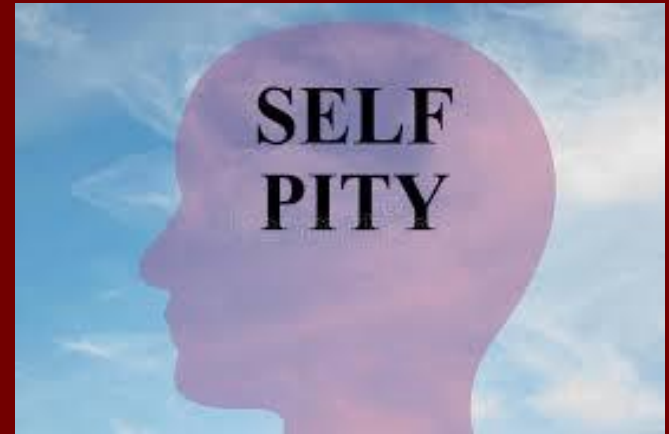
■ Romans 12:3

- “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”

What Is The Ultimate Cure For Self-Pity?

■ **Matthew 18:21-35**

- In the New Testament, the Greek word *eleeo* occurs only once (Matthew 18:33, "pity"), and it means "to be kind," "tender."
- In contrast, self-pity is the opposite—not tenderness to oneself, but an abusiveness that causes great stress and harm.
- It shows faithlessness by breaking the first commandment in placing oneself higher in importance than the Creator God.
- This obsession with self interferes with God's development of righteous character in us.



What Is The Ultimate Cure For Self-Pity?

■ I John 4:18

- In essence, self-pity is excessive love of oneself. Thus, a simple cure for self-pity is caring for someone else's welfare more than self—in a word, selflessness. Outgoing concern, love, toward others is outlined by the Ten Commandments, for they show love toward God and love toward neighbor.

■ Revelation 12:10-11

- The saints who overcome Satan and the world are known by the trait that "they did not love their lives to the death." They are willing to lay down their lives for their friends (John 15:13).

